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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

Netherlands that we must assign, at a very early period, the invention of the pillow. Lace-making has ever been one of the chief industries of that country, and one of the great sources of its national wealth. When every other manufacture was extinguished by the religious persecutions of the 16th century, the lace trade alone upheld itself, and saved the country from ruin. There are now nearly a thousand schools in Belgium devoted to this teaching, where the children at a very early age learn to twist the bobbins with wonderful dexterity. The old Flemish lace is of great beauty, and the "cutworks" and "points of Flanders" were, in the 16th century, equally esteemed with those of Italy. The laces of Brussels and Mechlin alone were distinguished later by their special names; all other fabrics of the Netherlands were known under the general designation of "Flanders" lace. That description in which the flowers join or are united by "brides," usually called guipure, was in general use for the lace cravats of the 17th century, and the bold, flowing scroll patterns are in the purest style of Louis XIV.

Most celebrated of all manufacturers of lace is that of Brussels, distinguished for the beauty of its ground, the perfection of its flowers, and the elegance of its pattern. The thread is of extraordinary fineness, made of the flax of Brabant. It is spun underground, for contact with the air causes it to break, being so fine as to almost escape the sight,—the lace spinner is guided only by touch. Hand-spun thread costs sometimes as high as \$1,200 per lb., and is consequently now but little used, a Scotch cotton thread being substituted, except for the finest lace; but machine-made thread has never arrived at the fineness of that made by hand.

The ground used in Brussels lace is of two kinds, needle-point, "point à l'aiguille," and pillow. The needle-point is made in small segments of an inch wide, and united by the invisible stitch called "fine joining." It is stronger, but three times more expensive than the pillow, and is rarely used except for royal orders. In the pillow-made ground, two sides of the hexagonal mesh are formed by four threads plaited, and the other four by threads twisted together; but these beautiful and costly grounds are now for ordinary purposes replaced by the fine machine-made net so well known under the name of "Brussels net."

The Brussels flowers are of two kinds, those made with the needle "point à l'aiguille," and those on the pillow, called "point plat;" both are made distinct from the grounds.

In old Brussels lace the flowers were worked into the ground; the pillow-made or "Brussels plat" are sewn on or "applied." The "modes" or "fillings" of Brussels lace are peculiarly beautiful, and it is also celebrated for the perfection of the relief or cordonnet which surrounds the flowers. The making of this exquisite lace is so complicated that each process is assigned to a separate hand, who works only at her own department, knowing nothing of the general effect to be produced by the whole, the sole responsibility of which rests with the head of the establishment.

Brussels lace is still called in France by its old appellation of "point d'Angleterre," or "English point," a name to be explained by history. In 1662, the English Parliament, alarmed at the sums of money sent out of the country for the purchase of foreign lace, prohibited its importation. The English lace merchants, at a loss how to supply the Brussels lace required at the court of King Charles the second, and possessed of large funds, bought up all the choicest lace in Brussels, and smuggled it over to England, where they produced it as "English point." To such an extent was this traffic carried on that the name of "Brussels" lace became every day less known, and was at last

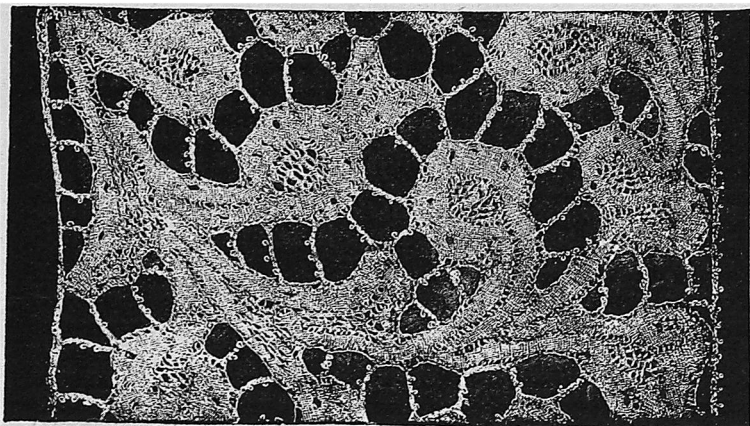


FIG. 4.—GUIPURE, FLEMISH; SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

entirely usurped by that of "point d'Angleterre," which it retains even at the present time.

Mechlin is made in one piece on the pillow, and is the prettiest of laces. The ground is light and clear. Its distinguishing characteristic is the flat, shining thread which forms the pattern, and gives the appearance of embroidery. The manufacture

has nearly died out. Mechlin lace has always held the highest favor in England.

West and East Flanders are the chief seats of the manufacture of Valenciennes lace, the art having been imported thither in the 17th century. It has attained the greatest perfection at Ypres (West Flanders), where it is made of the finest quality,



LAPPET, BRUSSELS; EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

and is remarkable for the large, clear, wire ground, the even tissue of its flowers, and its bold, flowing patterns. Ypres makes the widest Valenciennes known; this is very costly, as high as \$400 the yard, but the making of such lace is very laborious; a lace-maker working 12 hours a day, could scarcely produce one-third of an inch a week, and as many as 1,200 bobbins are sometimes employed upon one pillow.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A STAINED GLASS WINDOW.

THE stained glass window, illustrated on page 118, was one of the decorations belonging to the pavilion of our most Southern republic at the late Paris exhibition. The design is essentially French, the principal figure is that of a semi-nude woman, symbolizing the republic, bearing in her right hand a winged Mercury. In the foreground is a figure of a South American native woman, holding in her hand a cockatoo. In the background are the soldiers of the republic, bearing their banner, whereon is emblazoned the cap of Liberty. The composition is fine and vigorous, and symbolizes the progress and power of the most enterprising republic in South America.

WOODWORK came within the sphere of art when panels, softened and beautified by curvatures and mouldings, were introduced into frames. In difference of proportions, in ornament and arrangement there is no limit to the artistic modifications that these may undergo. There are rules, however, that do not admit of being transgressed, as, for instance, that the same size of panels should not appear in the upper and lower portion of an article of furniture, for the reason that the lower panels, by an optical illusion, will look smaller, whereas they should appear and be really larger. The upper panels of doors are, on this account, made smaller than the lower. The highest decorative art ever works within set rules, but in the very limitations these impose, ingenuity and taste find the means of providing for requirements founded on the laws of sight and the intuitions of judgment. For example, every article of furniture should have its salient points clearly pronounced. A cabinet or side-board will appear weak in which the pilasters which are essentially constructive in outline and supportive of weight, are little more than outlined. We recently saw a most faulty arrangement in the respective segments of a broken architrave being finished off at the open center with an acanthus leaf rolled back upon each, as if supporting them, the leaf being manifestly unsuited to the purpose. Fitness is a prime necessity in every form of decoration.

SOME of the ornamental woods cannot be smoothly planed, owing to their cross-grained nature, and must therefore be completed by scraping with a steel scraper and rubbing with glass paper.



A STAINED GLASS WINDOW.—SUBJECT: THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.